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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

August 28, 2003

Mr. David M. Walker  
Comptroller General of the United States  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
441 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Walker:

I write concerning the administration of the funds authorized by H.R. 4655, the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998, and H.R. 3579, the Fiscal Year 1998 Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act, with respect to the Iraqi National Congress (INC). In my capacity as Chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, I request that the GAO undertake as soon as possible the study requested in the May 2 letter to the GAO from Senators Santorum and Kyl.

As expressed in my letter of June 11, as well as in the Santorum/Kyl letter, allegations that the State Department's Near East Bureau may have acted improperly to impede the outlay of funds to the INC are extremely disturbing to my colleagues and me. If true, these allegations would imply a violation of the letter and spirit of these two laws, and a disregard for Congressional will.

Perhaps most alarming is the possibility that the delay in providing funds to the INC for communications and programming might have put our troops at a disadvantage. As we have seen, the U.S. has not been able to communicate well with the people of Iraq to convey the true nature of our role in that country, both before and after the invasion. Had the funds in question been released at an earlier date and an effective network been established to communicate with Iraqis, it is conceivable that U.S. soldiers might have faced less resistance, and might today enjoy the support of more Iraqis.

Because of my continuing concern for the safety of Americans in Iraq, I believe it is imperative to investigate the delay in releasing these funds. I urge the GAO proceed with this investigation without delay. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Ray Shepherd, Staff Director, on the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, at (202) 224-3721.

Sincerely,



Norm Coleman

Chairman

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations